

The overall exemptions for this document are (b)(1) and (b)(3).

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: SEP 2000

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2. PORTUGAL-AZORES: RECENT CONCESSIONS BY THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT ON AZOREAN AUTONOMY APPEAR TO HAVE FURTHER RELAXED POLITICAL TENSIONS IN THE ISLANDS AND TO HAVE STRENGTHENED LOCAL LEADERS WHO FAVOR AUTONOMY OVER INDEPENDENCE. 4.

THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO REVISE ITS DECEMBER 16 DECREE LAW ON LOCAL AUTONOMY WAS THE RESULT OF TALKS HELD ON JANUARY 13-14 WITH MEMBERS OF THE AZOREAN REGIONAL JUNTA. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE GOVERNMENT MADE KEY CONCESSIONS WHEN IT DELEGATED

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MINISTERIAL LEVEL POWERS TO THE ISLAND'S ADMINISTRATIVE JUNTA AND ACCEPTED A COMPROMISE PROPOSAL THAT JUNTA MEMBERS BE APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE JUNTA PRESIDENT. 4

THE JUNTA WILL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH ITS OWN REGIONAL PLANNING BODY AND TO SUBMIT ITS OWN BUDGET FOR APPROVAL IN LISBON. THE REVISED LAW GIVES THE JUNTA A MAJOR VOICE IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THE AZORES, BUT IT SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTS FROM JUNTA AUTHORITY SUCH GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS AS MONETARY AND FISCAL POLICY, DEFENSE AND SECURITY, AND JUSTICE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. 4

THE DECREE LAW IS A TEMPORARY EXPEDIENT TO SATISFY AZOREAN ASPIRATIONS WHICH WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL PASSAGE OF A STATUTE OF AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES. THIS WEEK THE JUNTA BEGAN REVISIONS TO A DRAFT STATUTE WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED TO LISBON FOR ITS APPROVAL. ACCEPTANCE BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL WILL GIVE THE STATUTE THE FORCE OF LAW. 4

ALTHOUGH TENSIONS OVER THE AUTONOMY-INDEPENDENCE QUESTION APPEAR TO BE SUBSIDING, THERE REMAINS A POSSIBILITY OF DISCONTENT

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OVER ECONOMIC ISSUES. SERIOUS SHORTAGES OF MEAT AND PRODUCE IN PORTUGAL, AZOREANS FEAR, COULD SOON HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE LOCAL MARKET, WHICH UP TO NOW HAS LARGELY BEEN SPARED THE ECONOMIC DISLOCATIONS AFFECTING THE MAINLAND. [REDACTED]

3. PORTUGAL: DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN LAST WEEK ON A NEW POLITICAL PACT BETWEEN THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PARTIES OVER THE ROLE EACH WILL PLAY IN A REVISED GOVERNMENT. THE DRAFT AGREEMENT PRESENTED BY THE MILITARY HAS ALREADY COME UNDER SHARP ATTACK FROM DEMOCRATIC PARTY LEADERS FOR RETAINING TOO MUCH POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE ALL-MILITARY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. 4

THE SOCIALISTS, WHO POLLED THE MOST VOTES IN THE ELECTION LAST APRIL, HELD THEIR FIRST ROUND OF TALKS WITH MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES LAST WEDNESDAY; THE TALKS CONTINUED OVER THE WEEKEND. THE PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS WILL HAVE TO PICK UP, HOWEVER, IF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS TO COMPLETE ITS WORK IN TIME TO COMPLY WITH THE COUNCIL'S PROMISE TO HOLD ELECTIONS BY APRIL 25. 4

WHILE THE MILITARY PROPOSAL APPEARS TO BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE PARTIES IN ITS PRESENT FORM, IT IS SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE

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AGREEMENT SIGNED LAST APRIL THAT ASSURED THE MILITARY VIRTUAL CONTROL OF PORTUGUESE POLITICS FOR THREE TO FIVE YEARS. THE REVISED VERSION, FOR INSTANCE, CALLS FOR THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN IN DIRECT COMPETITION WITH THE ELECTED LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. Y

THE SOCIALISTS, POPULAR DEMOCRATIC, AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER PARTIES HOPE TO RESTRICT THE COUNCIL TO AN ADVISORY ROLE. THEY HAVE ALREADY SIGNALLED THEIR INTENTION TO REJECT THE MILITARY'S PROPOSALS THAT THE COUNCIL BE GRANTED THE POWER TO: Y

--VETO PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS FOR PRIME MINISTER;

--RULE ON ALL CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS BEFORE THE COURTS AND ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS;■

--VETO BILLS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEALING WITH GENERAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, FINANCIAL, FOREIGN, OR DEFENSE POLICY.

THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR ALLIES, ON THE OTHER HAND, WANT THE ARMED FORCES TO RETAIN THE UPPER HAND IN THE LISBON GOVERNMENT, IN THE BELIEF THAT COMMUNIST INFLUENCE CONTINUES TO BE GREATER IN THE

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ARMED FORCES THAN AMONG CIVILIANS. 4

[REDACTED]

THE SO-CALLED OPERATIONAL GROUP IN THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL CLAIMS THE PACT WAS NOT FORMALLY APPROVED, AND THE "OPERATIONALS" AND CIVILIAN POLITICIANS MAY NOW WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN THE DRAFT AND AT THE SAME TIME LIMIT THE INFLUENCE OF THE POLITICALLY ORIENTED OFFICERS LIKE ANTUNES. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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